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section 450.210(d) in nonmetropolitan areas;

(5) Consider the concerns of Indian Tribal governments that have jurisdiction over land within the boundaries of the State;

(6) Consider related planning activities being conducted outside of metropolitan planning areas and between States; and

(7) Coordinate data collection and analyses with MPOs and public transportation operators to support statewide transportation planning and programming priorities and decisions.

(b) The State air quality agency shall coordinate with the State department of transportation (State DOT) to develop the transportation portion of the State Implementation Plan (SIP) consistent with the Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. 7401 *et seq.*).

(c) Two or more States may enter into agreements or compacts, not in conflict with any law of the United States, for cooperative efforts and mutual assistance in support of activities under this subpart related to interstate areas and localities in the States and establishing authorities the States consider desirable for making the agreements and compacts effective. The right to alter, amend, or repeal interstate compacts entered into under this part is expressly reserved.

(d) States may use any one or more of the management systems (in whole or in part) described in 23 CFR part 500.

(e) In carrying out the statewide transportation planning process, States should apply asset management principles and techniques consistent with the State Asset Management Plan for the NHS and the Transit Asset Management Plan, and Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan in establishing planning goals, defining STIP priorities, and assessing transportation investment decisions, including transportation system safety, operations, preservation, and maintenance.

(f) For non-NHS highways, States may apply principles and techniques consistent with other asset management plans to the transportation planning and programming processes, as appropriate.

(g) The statewide transportation planning process shall (to the maximum extent practicable) be consistent with the development of applicable regional intelligent transportation systems (ITS) architectures, as defined in 23 CFR part 940.

(h) Preparation of the coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan, as required by 49 U.S.C. 5310, should be coordinated and consistent with the statewide transportation planning process.

[81 FR 34135, May 27, 2016, as amended at 81 FR 93469, Dec. 20, 2016; 82 FR 56542, Nov. 29, 2017]

§ 450.210 Interested parties, public involvement, and consultation.

(a) In carrying out the statewide transportation planning process, including development of the long-range statewide transportation plan and the STIP, the State shall develop and use a documented public involvement process that provides opportunities for public review and comment at key decision points.

(1) The State's public involvement process at a minimum shall:

(i) Establish early and continuous public involvement opportunities that provide timely information about transportation issues and decision-making processes to individuals, affected public agencies, representatives of public transportation employees, public ports, freight shippers, private providers of transportation (including intercity bus operators), representatives of users of public transportation, representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities, representatives of the disabled, providers of freight transportation services, and other interested parties;

(ii) Provide reasonable public access to technical and policy information used in the development of the long-range statewide transportation plan and the STIP;

(iii) Provide adequate public notice of public involvement activities and time for public review and comment at key decision points, including a reasonable opportunity to comment on the proposed long-range statewide transportation plan and STIP;

(iv) To the maximum extent practicable, ensure that public meetings

are held at convenient and accessible locations and times;

(v) To the maximum extent practicable, use visualization techniques to describe the proposed long-range statewide transportation plan and supporting studies;

(vi) To the maximum extent practicable, make public information available in electronically accessible format and means, such as the World Wide Web, as appropriate to afford reasonable opportunity for consideration of public information;

(vii) Demonstrate explicit consideration and response to public input during the development of the long-range statewide transportation plan and STIP;

(viii) Include a process for seeking out and considering the needs of those traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems, such as low-income and minority households, who may face challenges accessing employment and other services; and

(ix) Provide for the periodic review of the effectiveness of the public involvement process to ensure that the process provides full and open access to all interested parties and revise the process, as appropriate.

(2) The State shall provide for public comment on existing and proposed processes for public involvement in the development of the long-range statewide transportation plan and the STIP. At a minimum, the State shall allow 45 calendar days for public review and written comment before the procedures and any major revisions to existing procedures are adopted. The State shall provide copies of the approved public involvement process document(s) to the FHWA and the FTA for informational purposes.

(3) With respect to the setting of targets, nothing in this part precludes a State from considering comments made as part of the State's public involvement process.

(b) The State shall provide for nonmetropolitan local official participation in the development of the long-range statewide transportation plan and the STIP. The State shall have a documented process(es) for cooperating with nonmetropolitan local officials representing units of general purpose

local government and/or local officials with responsibility for transportation that is separate and discrete from the public involvement process and provides an opportunity for their participation in the development of the long-range statewide transportation plan and the STIP. Although the FHWA and the FTA shall not review or approve this cooperative process(es), the State shall provide copies of the process document(s) to the FHWA and the FTA for informational purposes.

(1) At least once every 5 years, the State shall review and solicit comments from nonmetropolitan local officials and other interested parties for a period of not less than 60 calendar days regarding the effectiveness of the cooperative process and any proposed changes. The State shall direct a specific request for comments to the State association of counties, State municipal league, regional planning agencies, or directly to nonmetropolitan local officials.

(2) The State, at its discretion, is responsible for determining whether to adopt any proposed changes. If a proposed change is not adopted, the State shall make publicly available its reasons for not accepting the proposed change, including notification to nonmetropolitan local officials or their associations.

(c) For each area of the State under the jurisdiction of an Indian Tribal government, the State shall develop the long-range statewide transportation plan and STIP in consultation with the Tribal government and the Secretary of the Interior. States shall, to the extent practicable, develop a documented process(es) that outlines roles, responsibilities, and key decision points for consulting with Indian Tribal governments and Department of the Interior in the development of the long-range statewide transportation plan and the STIP.

(d) To carry out the transportation planning process required by this section, a Governor may establish and designate RTPOs to enhance the planning, coordination, and implementation of the long-range statewide transportation plan and STIP, with an emphasis on addressing the needs of nonmetropolitan areas of the State. In

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order to be treated as an RTPO for purposes of this Part, any existing regional planning organization must be established and designated as an RTPO under this section.

(1) Where established, an RTPO shall be a multijurisdictional organization of nonmetropolitan local officials or their designees who volunteer for such organization and representatives of local transportation systems who volunteer for such organization.

(2) An RTPO shall establish, at a minimum:

(i) A policy committee, the majority of which shall consist of nonmetropolitan local officials, or their designees, and, as appropriate, additional representatives from the State, private business, transportation service providers, economic development practitioners, and the public in the region; and

(ii) A fiscal and administrative agent, such as an existing regional planning and development organization, to provide professional planning, management, and administrative support.

(3) The duties of an RTPO shall include:

(i) Developing and maintaining, in cooperation with the State, regional long-range multimodal transportation plans;

(ii) Developing a regional TIP for consideration by the State;

(iii) Fostering the coordination of local planning, land use, and economic development plans with State, regional, and local transportation plans and programs;

(iv) Providing technical assistance to local officials;

(v) Participating in national, multistate, and State policy and planning development processes to ensure the regional and local input of nonmetropolitan areas;

(vi) Providing a forum for public participation in the statewide and regional transportation planning processes;

(vii) Considering and sharing plans and programs with neighboring RTPOs, MPOs, and, where appropriate, Indian Tribal Governments; and

(viii) Conducting other duties, as necessary, to support and enhance the

statewide planning process under § 450.206.

(4) If a State chooses not to establish or designate an RTPO, the State shall consult with affected nonmetropolitan local officials to determine projects that may be of regional significance.

§ 450.212 Transportation planning studies and project development.

(a) Pursuant to section 1308 of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century, TEA–21 (Pub. L. 105–178), a State(s), MPO(s), or public transportation operator(s) may undertake a multimodal, systems-level corridor or subarea planning study as part of the statewide transportation planning process. To the extent practicable, development of these transportation planning studies shall involve consultation with, or joint efforts among, the State(s), MPO(s), and/or public transportation operator(s). The results or decisions of these transportation planning studies may be used as part of the overall project development process consistent with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*) and associated implementing regulations (23 CFR part 771 and 40 CFR parts 1500–1508). Specifically, these corridor or subarea studies may result in producing any of the following for a proposed transportation project:

(1) Purpose and need or goals and objective statement(s);

(2) General travel corridor and/or general mode(s) definition (e.g., highway, transit, or a highway/transit combination);

(3) Preliminary screening of alternatives and elimination of unreasonable alternatives;

(4) Basic description of the environmental setting; and/or

(5) Preliminary identification of environmental impacts and environmental mitigation.

(b) Publicly available documents or other source material produced by, or in support of, the transportation planning process described in this subpart may be incorporated directly or by reference into subsequent NEPA documents, in accordance with 40 CFR 1502.21, if: